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MILL RUN ELEMENTARY D.A.R.E.
PROGRAM

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 8, 2006

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor for me today to recognize the recent D.A.R.E. graduates from Mill Run Elementary School in Ashburn, Virginia. D.A.R.E.—Drug Abuse Resistance Education—has a long history of providing children with the information and skills they need to live drug-and-violence-free lives and I was pleased to recently visit the fifth graders at Mill Run as they completed this program.

I would like to recognize Mill Run principal, Paul Vickers, and fifth grade teachers, Ms. Garofalo, Ms. Neely, Ms. Page, Ms. Sovereign, Ms. Williams, Ms. Wolff, and Mr. Wolslayer. Special acknowledgment also goes to D.A.R.E. officer, Deputy Lynette Ridgley, who is specially trained to work with students, answer their questions, and establish a positive relationship between students, law enforcement, and the community. The D.A.R.E. program, supported by dedicated school faculty, has helped to address the critical need to educate our youth on the consequences of involvement in drugs, gangs, and violence, and how to avoid risky behavior.

Several students at Mill Run Elementary received special awards for poster and essay submissions. Poster winners include Krista Sanders-Mason, Manik Dayal, William Kim, Ryan Orr, Rob Kramer, Renato Mazzei, Ellie Ferguson, and Brigitte Ganzer. Essay winners include Rachael Williams, Brandon Greer, Francesca Beller, TJ Soroka, Nick Carroll, Emily Ready, and Colin Ceresa. I have inserted for the record these students' essays because I feel it is important to hear from the students themselves about how much of an impact the D.A.R.E. program has made.

One student, TJ Soroka, says it plain and simple, "The information taught in the D.A.R.E. program has given me the knowledge to make good decisions in my life."

(By T.J. Soroka)

When you go to school, you take many subjects, but this year I took one program unlike any other. That was DARE which stands for Drug Abuse Resistance Education. It's not taught by any ordinary teacher. In fact, DARE is taught by a Deputy Sheriff who works in Loudoun County. When we started DARE, I thought it would only be about smoking and drugs. But we also learned about inhalants, making good decisions, friendship qualities, being confident, and much more. But I gained the most knowledge in DARE while learning about tobacco and the qualities of a good friend.

Before you smoke a cigarette, think of all the bad things you're doing, such as putting 200 poisons in your body. Also, you aren't

just hurting yourself, you're hurting the environment and the people around you. If you're under 18, it's against the law to smoke. I hope you don't smoke a cigarette, now knowing the affects of it.

Do you think your friends have good traits? Do they treat you like a friend? True friends have these qualities. They are loyal to you and you can trust them. Also, they have a bright personality so they can cheer you up. Last, if your friend asks you to smoke, you should have a second thought about them being your friend, after making a bad decision.

The information taught in the DARE program has given me knowledge to make good decisions. DARE also teaches you how to say no to drugs and other substances. Next, DARE has taught me affects of drugs and everything else. DARE has gave me the knowledge to make good decisions in my life.

(By Francesca Beller)

What exactly is D.A.R.E.? D.A.R.E. means Drug Abuse Resistance Education. It teaches kids to make smart decisions and teaches them about drugs and alcohol. Our teacher was Deputy Ridgley. She taught us several interesting facts about tobacco, marijuana, peer pressure, and other things that may or may not scare you.

Tobacco, the killer of over 400,000 people a year. It is illegal to anyone under the age of 18, but even though it is, children still do it!

Tobacco affects your body development, so it really affects kids! There are also many diseases that tobacco can cause, such as heart disease, lung cancer, and mouth cancer. So, tobacco is very dangerous to people young and old with its 200 known poisons.

Inhalants, something that can cause sudden death is not what anyone wants. Inhalants have become a big problem now. Teens are using inhalants a lot. They use super glue, paint thinner, and other things. Inhalants can suffocate you and cause diarrhea. They also starve the body of oxygen and force the heart to beat irregularly. Some chronic users may have reduced muscle tone of strength. So if inhalants are so bad, why do it?

Advertisements, they trick people into buying bad products. Some tobacco commercials or advertisements may have you knocking on the wrong door. If tobacco turns your teeth yellow, then why do people in the ads have such white teeth? Beer ads do the same thing. They do not tell you the consequences most of the time. All they care about is you buying the product! Also, a tobacco company gave a ton of money to a charity, then spent more money than what they gave to charity telling people about it! Don't be fooled by advertisements, it may cut your life short.

I think D.A.R.E. has really made an impact on my life. Now I know everything I need to know about things from drugs to alcohol to peer pressure. I really think that everyone should take D.A.R.E., because it will probably lead most people down the right path for their lives. D.A.R.E. is very fun and is just a great program!

(By Brandon Greer)

"Click, click." The teenager was just handcuffed for smoking marijuana in a bathroom. I will never make this decision because of D.A.R.E. D.A.R.E. is a program that teaches you about drugs. The D.A.R.E. decision-making model, advertising, friendship qualities, peer pressure, personal pressure, ways to say no, and being confident. Our D.A.R.E. teacher was Deputy Ridgley. She was truly kind and comical. She told our class interesting stories in relation to her experiences about drugs.

One main drug we talked about was tobacco. Tobacco is found in cigarettes and in chewing tobacco. Tobacco is responsible for more than 400,000 deaths in America each year. Tobacco shoots your body right in the foot because it causes some major health problems. One is you could suffer shortness of breath and dizziness. It also hurts the people around you, because approximately 3,000 nonsmokers die each year from lung cancer. If you want to be beautiful, don't smoke. The 200 known poisons in the cigarette's smoke can affect your appearance. One way smoking affects your appearance is it dries your skin out and causes wrinkles. Smoking also causes yellow teeth and gives you terrible breath. Yuck!

Another major issue we spoke about was being confident. You need to be confident when a friend asks you a question, such as "Do you want to smoke?" Do not speak in a weak voice or have poor posture while you tell your friend you are not interested. Your friend will just keep nagging at you to smoke because he knows that you are unsure. To show your confidence, you must have excellent posture by standing up straight with shoulders back and chin up. Look your friend right in the eye and maintain eye contact. You then must speak clearly and respectfully. Remember to stay calm and say no thank you. If you are confident your friend will stop asking you to smoke. Hopefully, your friend will ask you if you want to do some other activity.

I really loved D.A.R.E. I think that D.A.R.E. will actually help me in the future by knowing how to say no to drugs. I believe that it is extremely important to be drug free. If you take drugs you are basically throwing away your life because you might become addicted and think you must have drugs. I also think it is important that my friends and family do not do drugs. If you are drug free you can enjoy sports like, skiing, soccer, football, basketball, hockey, and other activities. You will also live a longer and have a better life if you don't do drugs. I have truthfully enjoyed learning about drugs and other D.A.R.E. topics. I will always continue to be 100% drug free.

(By Rachael T. Williams)

D.A.R.E. is something everybody can listen to, Drug Abuse Resistance Education. D.A.R.E. helps kids understand the cautions of drugs and alcohol from the start, and that nothing is real on advertising. Those are only two of the millions of things that D.A.R.E. teaches you!

Alcohol isn't something that helps you grow or something to play with. Alcohol is loss of self-control or even coma and death! Yes, you can drink once you're over twenty-one, but that doesn't give you the right to go party until four in the morning! Alcohol is a very dangerous thing. It is something you should never drink if you're under age, not even if someone calls you chicken. Even if they try to act tougher than you are, they're not. They're not stronger than you are, or cooler, or smarter than you are. It may seem like they're cooler but truly they're not.

You may look into a magazine and flip a few pages and then see an advertisement, and you will see people smoking cigarettes and having a great time. Well guess what, that is not reality. Reality is yellow teeth and sickness and your lungs turning black and failing. Cigarettes or cigars aren't a pool filled with fun. It causes breathing problems or heart disease and even cancer in your lungs, mouth, throat, bladder, and kidney! Smoking is just a big black hole of emptiness! So, don't listen to advertisements.

Peer pressure happens to everybody. It can happen on the bus, at recess, or even walking home from school. Sometimes people will be pressuring you about drugs or sometimes alcohol. They will make it seem fun and make it look like the answer to your prayers. Well, it's not. There are a lot of ways to say no like using humor or standing up for yourself. Those are just two ways to say no. D.A.R.E. will teach you many other ways.

D.A.R.E. is an awesome place to learn about drugs and how they can hurt you. I love going to D.A.R.E. Before D.A.R.E., I didn't even know half of the cautions of drugs and alcohol and how risky it is to drink or smoke. I know now that one day I'm going to be offered a cigarette or some alcohol, and I know exactly what to say: "NO!" I'll walk away and never trust a person like that again. Now I'll remember that no is the way to go.

(By Colin Ceresa)

In fifth grade we take a special class called D.A.R.E. D.A.R.E. stands for Drug Abuse Resistance Education. My D.A.R.E. teacher, Deputy Ridgley, teaches us the dangers of drugs and alcohol, how to say no, and how to avoid dangerous situations.

Smoking can do horrible things to your body. Did you know smoking can turn your lungs black? Smoking makes it hard to breathe and makes you dizzy. It makes your breath smell, turns your teeth yellow, dries your skin out and causes wrinkles. There are 200 known poisons in cigarette smoke. Smoking is the most common cause of lung cancer. I feel that smoking is very wrong. My Pop-Pop started smoking during the Viet Nam War and then smoked for 40 years. Luckily he quit a few years ago and is doing fine.

If you want to avoid all these bad things you need to be able to say no!!! Saying no can help you avoid many dangerous situations. You can say no in many ways. You could ignore the person offering you drugs. You could give a reason or fact to the person who is offering you drugs and tell them why they are bad for you, or you could walk away from the person who is offering you drugs. Saying no can change your life in so many ways. Saying no could even save your life.

I feel that all of the information that I learned in D.A.R.E. will help me a lot in the future. I know how bad alcohol, drugs and tobacco are for you. I also learned that you

need to be confident and not let your friends pressure you into doing something that is illegal or will hurt you. D.A.R.E. has helped show me the importance of just saying NO!

(By Emily Ready)

"Good afternoon, guys. Today we're going to talk about..." Every single year, fifth graders in Loudon County take a class called D.A.R.E. D.A.R.E. stands for Drug Abuse Resistance Education. A deputy from Loudon County Sheriff's office comes and teaches you. Some of my favorite things that we learned about were tobacco, alcohol, and peer pressure.

Coughing, yellow teeth, cancer? These are just some of the things tobacco does to you. Cigarettes contain tobacco, and smoking is the main cause of heart disease. More than 400,000 people die every year from smoking. It can also turn your lungs from natural pink to sickening black. My thoughts on tobacco are tobacco is a horrible thing, and if you use it, you are ruining your life!

Jail, comas, and possible death are only a few of the things too much alcohol can get you. Alcohol is in beer, wine, and liquor. It slows down your brain and your body. In case you're wondering, most teenagers DON'T drink alcohol. I think if people were more responsible with alcohol, it wouldn't be a problem.

Peer pressure is when other people, friends or not, try to get you to do something you may or may not wish to do. Some people can be mean about it, or some will be nice and it can be something good for you. If it's bad, just say NO! I think if it's mean or bad peer pressure, we don't need it! It can hurt people's feelings and make them do something dangerous or awful that can hurt them or other people.

I really enjoyed the D.A.R.E. program this year. It showed me just how dangerous smoking and underage drinking really are. I believe it is important to stay drug-free because you can destroy yourself, your family, and your future. So, I, Emily Ready, promise to stay drug-free and stay a non-tobacco user and a nonunderage drinker.

(By Nick Carroll)

"Lost another one to drugs because of over use of alcohol," sighed Dr. Smith. That won't happen to me because I took D.A.R.E. class. D.A.R.E. stands for Drug Abuse Resistance Education. During D.A.R.E. we learned about alcohol, inhalants, marijuana, and tobacco. We learned about more than just drugs. We learned how to say no and about the D.A.R.E. decision making model. We also learned about how dangerous inhalants can be and the tricks of advertisement.

Inhalants can be used as a type of drug. It can be made using household products concentrated in a certain place (like in a paper bag). They are very dangerous! It can kill you instantly even if you're doing it for the first time. Inhalants can damage your brain and liver. You might suffer from a loss of smell, depression, and can cause a heart attack! It can also suffocate you. It will starve your body of oxygen and force your heart to beat irregularly and more rapidly. You could get sores in the mouth and nose. Chronic users can have muscle wasting and reduced muscle tone and strength. Inhalants can cause nausea and nosebleeds. Inhalants are one of the things that kill many children each year. Inhalants can cause most of these problems without you knowing it until it's too late.

Advertising is one of the ways drug companies get people to buy their stuff. One of the ways they do it is to show famous celebrities drinking beer or smoking a cigarette. They also show happy people with beer, wine, or a cigarette. They put advertisements almost everywhere you could look. They put them on TV commercials, in magazines, billboards, and many other places. They think that by putting them in a lot of places they are getting more customers and it works, people go for the advertisements.

I think D.A.R.E. was an exciting subject. We learned many things from our instructor, Deputy Ridgley. She made it enjoyable to learn about drugs and how to stay drug free. Deputy Ridgley told us many stories, which made it exciting. I think that it is important to stay drug free to keep from getting sick or hurt from different drugs. I will stay drug free to keep from getting sick or hurt by drugs!